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Guyana: British involvement in Jagan's downfall

Sir,—In the story entitled "CIA Role in Jagan's Downfall," your Commonwealth Correspondent, Mr Patrick Keatley, correctly involved the CIA through the Gotham Foundation and the London based Public Service International, the foreign relations arm of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

What he did not bring out, however, was the British Government's involvement which was posed by the "Sheffield Morning Telegraph" (April 17): "Was the British Government aware of what was happening, and did it perhaps connive at the attempts to get rid of the left-wing Jagan?"

This query was actually answered by the "Sunday Times" on April 23 in a story "Macmillan, Sandys backed CIA plot." The newspaper also involved two top security men in Britain and "a number of British officials in Guyana," and asserted that "the CIA were also operating under consular cover in Guyana."

GOVERNOR'S FAILURE

The involvement of the British Government was the reason for the refusal of the Governor to expel in 1963 the CIA agent Howard McCabe, and for the failure of the Governor and the Commissioner of Police to cooperate fully with my Government and to use the police and security forces to maintain law and order. Indeed, so bad was the non-cooperation that Janet Jagan resigned in protest as Minister of Home Affairs in early 1964.

Before the "Times" story, Drew Pearson, the American columnist, in March 1964 had indicated that the 1963 80-day "strike was secretly inspired by United States CIA money and British Intelligence. It gave London the excuse it wanted." The latter is a reference to the October 1963 Independence Conference, when Duncan Sandys refused to fix a date for independence and imposed the list system of proportional representation.

What the "Times" story, however, failed to do was to show the Labour Government's involvement. When in Opposition, the Labour Party leaders Harold Wilson, Arthur Bottomley and Anthony Greenwood had taken a very strong position. Mr Wilson had referred to the outcome of the 1963 Conference as "a

fiddled constitutional arrangement."

When in office, however, the Labour Party changed its position.

In October, 1964, I saw Anthony Greenwood and Harold Wilson in London and presented them with a full documentation of the CIA plot, including the Security Branch report entitled "Research Paper on the PNC Terrorist Organisation," which had named 50 persons including top leaders and activists of the PNC and an American with a recommendation that 25 should be prosecuted. I requested that the elections fixed for December 7 should be postponed and that a Commonwealth team, as had been proposed in June, 1964, by Harold Wilson in the House of Commons, should go out to Guyana to help work out a solution. However, both Wilson and Greenwood agreed to go ahead with the elections.

It is significant to note that during the same week I saw the Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary the "New York Times" (October 31, 1964) reported that the British Government "bowing to United States wishes, had ruled out early independence for British Guiana," and was going ahead with the PR elections fixed for December 7. "This development, reported by senior officials tonight," said the newspaper, "came after high level British-American exchanges on how to check the spread of Castroism in the Western Hemisphere. . . . Foreign Secretary Patrick Gordon Walker, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk

examined the situation in their talks in Washington this week. Informants said that Mr Rusk had left Mr Gordon Walker in no doubt that the United States would resist a rise of British Guiana, as an independent Castro-type State."

The Labour Government thus failed to work out a political settlement in Guyana, and instead allowed the United States to establish a puppet regime here which is step by step leading the country to a dictatorship. Already the National Security Act empowers the Government to restrict and detain individuals indefinitely without trial. Anti-strike legislation in the form of compulsory arbitration is to be enacted. And there is every indication that elections in 1968 will be rigged.

CIA SUBVERSION

The British people rightly have expressed horror at the military rape of democracy in Greece. What about Guyana and Vietnam? There is a short step indeed for US policy makers from CIA subversion in Guyana to a military takeover in Greece and to a cruel war in Vietnam. From the Truman Doctrine of "containment" the world has arrived at the Johnson Doctrine of "intervention." For their own security, the British people must shout now for an end to the close collaboration between Britain and the war maniacs in Washington.—Yours truly,

Cheddi Jagan. ✓

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